Template Press Release Copy for Partners

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USGBC creates new Alternative Compliance Path to accept American Tree Farm System® and other certified wood, encouraging sustainable wood supplies from responsible sources

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016 – [INSERT AGENCY/ASSOCIATION NAME] yesterday applauded the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announcement to create a new path in its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system, to encourage more wood use, including wood from family woodlands.

The USGBC this week released its quarterly addendum to the LEED rating system which aims to encourage more use of responsibly sources building materials, by allowing builders to get credit in the LEED system for using wood products from forests certified by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).

“[INSERT AGENCY/ASSOCIATION NAME] applauds USGBC’s efforts to create more opportunities for using wood in LEED buildings, including the wood grown here in [INSERT STATE] by our family and private forest owners,” said [INSERT NAME].

In [INSERT STATE], there are more than [INSERT NUMBER] of family forest owners who manage [INSERT NUMBER] acres of forest land, providing sustainable wood fiber while also conserving clean water and air, wildlife habitat, and ensuring the overall health of our forests. The forestry industry in [INSERT STATE] generates [INSERT NUMBER] in economic revenue each year.

“Our family forest owners in [INSERT STATE] need markets for their sustainably grown wood products to help them keep their land as forest and continue to conduct forest management. USGBC’s announcement is not just a win for wood; it’s a win for the millions of families and small landowners who own and manage our forests in the state,” said [INSERT NAME].

Over the past ten years, hundreds of political leaders, governors, state foresters and forest organizations, such as the American Forest Foundation, which houses ATFS, and SFI have advocated to
urge USGBC to change its LEED rating system to better recognize wood, especially wood from ATFS and SFI certified lands. Leaders in [INSERT STATE], particularly, [INSERT GOVERNOR AND/OR STATE FORESTER NAME], have weighed in on this issue with USGBC throughout the years, providing critical pressure to make this change happen.

For more information on this announcement, visit the forest conservation organization that runs ATFS, American Forest Foundation’s press room.

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